

August 23, 2000

TO: All State Directors
Rural Development

ATTN: Program Managers for Single Family Housing and
State Environmental Coordinators

FROM: James Kearney
Administrator
Rural Housing Service

SUBJECT: 1999 Management Control Review Report
Single Family Housing: Direct 502 Loans

The 1999 Management Control Review Report referenced above made several recommendations for corrective action. This unnumbered letter responds to Control Objective #5 and Control Objective #6.

Control Objective #5: “To ensure compliance with Agency environmental regulations.”

Recommendation: “Provide guidance to the State Directors in the form of an unnumbered letter which clarifies responsibilities and provides a basic training outline for employees completing environmental reviews.”

Response: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, supplemented by the Council on Environmental Quality’s regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR part 1500-1508), requires federal agencies to investigate the potential environmental impacts of their proposed actions before making decision on whether or not to participate in the action. This process of investigation and analysis is referred to as the NEPA process. The NEPA process is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on a clear understanding of the environmental consequences of the proposed action and to take appropriate actions which will protect, enhance, and restore the environment. This includes implementing mitigation measures, which will either avoid impacting the environment or, at a minimum, will lessen the adverse impact on the environment.

Responsibility for NEPA compliance rests with the federal agency. This responsibility cannot be delegated. Nevertheless, applicants are expected to become familiar with federal environmental requirements and, as necessary, to cooperate with the Agency in the collection of environmental data, to assist in the preparation of the environmental review, and in the resolution of environmental problems.

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Administrative/Other Programs

Agency employees involved in the Single Family Housing program need a certain level of environmental training in order to adequately fulfill applicable environmental compliance requirements. Attachment 1 provides a detailed outline of the subject matter which needs to be covered. State Environmental Coordinators should provide this training and should use Attachment 1 as a guide to establish their own agenda. All employees working in the direct single family housing program should attend. Since these environmental requirements are equally applicable to the single family housing guaranteed program, those employees should also take advantage of this opportunity for training.

Control Objective #6: “To ensure compliance with the Agency’s Flood Insurance requirements and policies.”

Recommendation: “Provide guidance to the State Directors in the form of training to State Environmental Coordinators on the completion of the “Standard Flood Hazard Determination” and Agency responsibilities related to flood insurance statutes.”

Response: This training was provided to the State Environmental Coordinators at the Architectural & Environmental Training held September 13-17, 1999, in Arlington, Virginia. A copy of the lesson plan dealing with proper completion of the “Standard Flood Hazard Determination” form is enclosed for use by the State Environmental Coordinators, who should provide training on flood insurance as part of the environmental training under Control Objective #5.

If there are any environmental questions, please contact Sue Wieferich, Program Support Staff, at (202) 720-9647. All other questions should be referred to Betsy Fletcher, Branch Chief, Single Family Housing Direct Loan Division, at (202) 720-1486.

Attachments

(Attachment 2 not Automated)

**Basic Environmental Training
for
Single Family Housing Programs**

Agenda

Welcome/Introductions

Course Objectives/Review of Agenda

**Overview: The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
and the NEPA review process**

- The national policy, goals, and mandated procedures set forth by NEPA,
- How NEPA changed the way federal agencies do business,
- How requirements of other federal environmental statutes are incorporated into the NEPA process,
- Who is responsible for NEPA compliance,
- What are basic sources of environmental information,
- Initiating NEPA early,
- Public involvement,
- Classification of federal activities (CATEX, Class I & II EAs, EIS),
- Define and discuss area of potential effect,
- Define and discuss identification of protected resources,
- Define and discuss identification of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts,
- Define and discuss alternative analysis,
- Define and discuss mitigation measures,
- Define and discuss the finding/decision document,
- Discuss differences between EA and EIS (significance)
- Violations of NEPA and other statutes.

Source: 1998 Training Manual: “Historical Perspective: NEPA.”

Overview: Key sections of RD Instruction 1940-G

Select pertinent portions of following sections of RD Instruction 1940-G for review and discussion. Some important paragraphs are suggested:

- §1940.301 (c), (d), & (h) Purpose.
- §1940.302 (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) & (h) Definitions.

§1940.303 (a) through (e) General Policy.
§1940.304 Special Policy.
§1940.305 (a) & (b) Policy Implementation.
§1940.309 (a), (b), (d), (e) & (f) Responsibilities of the prospective applicant.
§1940.310 Categorical Exclusions.
§1940.311 Environmental Assessments for Class I Actions (brief overview).
§1940.312 Environmental Assessments for Class II Actions (brief overview).
§1940.315 (a), (b) & (d) Timing of the environmental review process.
§1940.317 (a) through (g) Methods for ensuring proper implementation of categorical exclusions.
§1940.324 Adoption of an environmental assessment prepared by another federal agency (brief overview).
§1940.330 Monitoring.
§1940.331 Public Involvement (brief overview).
Exhibits to RD Instruction 1940-G (brief overview, eliminate Exhibits J, K & M).

Single Family Housing Loan Making and the NEPA Process

Discuss Chapter 5 of the Direct SFH Handbook as guidance in understanding the requirements of 1940-G and point out that Chapter 5 in no way replaces or supercedes any of the requirements of 1940-G (see Chapter 1, section 1, 1.1, last paragraph).

Source: Chapter 5, section 3, 5.8, A, B & C, of the Direct Single Family Housing Handbook (HB-1-3550).

State Natural Resources Management Guide

Discuss the purpose of the State Natural Resources Management Guide, how to use it, and point out any requirements of State environmental laws that it contains.

Sources: Your State Natural Resources Management Guide and §1940.305 (d).

Form RD 1940-22, “Environmental Checklist for Categorical Exclusions”

Review Form and discuss its proper completion. Reference §1940.317 (e), (f) & (g) and elevation to modified Class I assessment.

Source: 1998 Training Manual: Environmental Reviews: “Categorical Exclusions.”

Form RD 1940-21, “Environmental Assessment for Class I Action” and Exhibit H, RD Instruction 1940-G, Environmental Assessment for Class II Actions”

Briefly review Form/format and discuss their proper completion.

Source: 1998 Training Manual: Environmental Reviews: “Class I & II Assessments.”

Minimizing duplication

Briefly discuss adoption of other federal assessments and incorporation by reference of other non-federal material.

Sources: 1998 Training Manual: Environmental Reviews: “Adoption” and reference §1940.324

Public Notices and Public Meetings

Briefly discuss public notice requirements and public meetings.

Sources: 1998 Training Manual: Public Involvement and §1940.331.

Protected Resources and Compliance Requirements

Discuss of each of the protected resources (some may need more emphasis than others). Discuss the required consultation procedures with the agencies providing technical assistance.

1. Wetlands: Executive Order 11990.
2. Floodplains: Executive Order 11988.
3. Important Farmland: Farmland Protection Policy Act.
4. Endangered and Threatened Species and Critical Habitat: Endangered Species Act.
5. Historical and archaeological sites: National Historic Preservation Act.
6. Wild and Scenic Rivers/Nationwide Rivers Inventory: Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.
7. Coastal Barrier Resources System: Coastal Barrier Resources Act.
8. Approved Coastal Zone Management Area: Coastal Zone Management Act.
9. Sole Source Aquifer Recharge Area: Safe Drinking Water Act.
10. National Natural Landmark: Historic Sites Act.
11. National Historic or Scenic Trail: National Trails Act.
12. National Wilderness Preservation System: Wilderness Act.
13. Other Environmental Issues for Consideration:
 - Water Quality.
 - Air Quality.
 - Noise.
 - Transportation impacts.
 - Construction impacts.
 - Socioeconomic impacts.

Sources: Protected Resource lesson plans in the 1998 Training Manual and the State Natural Resources Management Guide.

Loan Servicing Activities

Discuss NEPA requirements for loan servicing activities.

Source: §1940.310 (e) (2) & (6).

Environmental Constraints on Property Management (REO) Activities

Discuss the environmental constraints imposed on agency repair and maintenance activities and on leases and management contracts.

Sources: Chapter 15, section 15.7, A & B, of the Direct Single Family Housing Handbook (HB-1-3550) and §1940.310 (e)(6).

NEPA Requirements for Disposal of REO Property

Discuss the environmental requirements for disposal of REO property by the agency.

Sources: Chapter 16, section 4, 16.12 through 16.17 & 16.19, of the Direct Single Family Housing Handbook (HB-1-3550) and §1940.310 (e)(6).

Environmental Risk Management: Due Diligence and the Transaction Screen Questionnaire

Discuss the requirements for due diligence in loan making and loan servicing activities.

Sources: Chapter 5, 5.9 and Chapter 15, section 15.8 and Chapter 16, section 4, 16.18, of the Direct Single Family Housing Handbook (HB-1-3550)

Flood Insurance and Standard Flood Hazard Determination (FEMA Form 81-93)

Discuss flood insurance requirements and use of FEMA Form 81-93.

Sources: RD Instruction 426.2, RD AN No. 3538 (426.2), May 1, 2000, and Lesson Plan titled: "Completion of Standard Flood Hazard Determination Form."

August 23, 2000

TO: Rural Development
State Directors

ATTN: Rural Housing Program Directors, Program Loan
Cost Coordinators, Contract Program Managers

FROM: James C. Kearney
Administrator
Rural Housing Service

SUBJECT: Rural Housing Service Program Loan Cost
Coordinators

In response to a request received at the Contract Program Managers Training held in Phoenix, Arizona, May 8-11, 2000, guidance is hereby provided for assigning the collateral duty of Program Loan Cost Coordinator for Housing Programs in State Offices.

The Program Loan Cost Coordinator is a Program official who serves as the central point of contact in a State Office for all Program Loan Cost issues, funding, and management in the housing and community facilities programs. For internal control purposes and in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest in obligating Government funds, the Program Loan Cost Coordinator cannot also serve as the Contracting Officer. Any Contracting Officer currently performing Coordinator duties should be replaced by a Program official as soon as practical. Normally, a Program Loan Cost Coordinator is appointed for an indefinite term by the State Director at the recommendation of the State's Rural Housing Program Director or Rural Housing and Community Development Program Director. The assignment of Coordinator could constitute up to 20 percent of an employee's time. For this reason, it may be appropriate to amend a Coordinator's position description with the responsibilities listed in Attachment 1. In addition, in order to evaluate the performance of required Coordinator tasks and responsibilities, it may be appropriate to add to the Coordinator's existing performance

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elements and standards using the narrative provided in Attachment 2. For your convenience in utilizing this information, we have stored this Unnumbered Letter and the attachments on the Rural Development Intranet site at **<http://rdintra.usda.gov>**. They can be found in the Rural Housing Service Documents Library.

The Program Support Staff (PSS) maintains a current list of Program Loan Cost Coordinators (Attachment 3). Please notify Don Stander, PSS, at (202) 720-2960, with any additions, corrections, or changes to this list. If you have any questions or comments regarding this memorandum, please contact Carl Muhlbauer, PSS, at (202) 690-2141.

Attachments (3) **(Attachment not Automated)**

Sent by Facsimile on 08-24-00 at 9:24 am by PSS. State Director should inform all appropriate personnel.

August 14, 2000

SUBJECT: Teleconference Calls

TO: Rural Development National Office Officials

Several months ago, the Deputy Administrator for Operations and Management established new procedures for requesting supplies and services due to budget reductions in the Administrative Operating Plan. As a further cost saving alternative to teleconferencing with one or two other locations, we suggest you first consider using the office speaker telephones with multiple people gathered at each participating site. This is convenient, less costly, and most office telephones can perform 3-way conferencing. Some phones assigned to division directors and above can perform 6-way conferencing.

When teleconferencing needs exceed office phone capability, arrangements should be made through the USDA Video and Teleconference Center (VTC). While this is more economical than travel, it is not without expense. The USDA VTC charges a minimum of \$90.00 per hour for 10 lines or less for operator assisted/monitored calls. Charges increase by \$45.00 for each additional 5 lines. The VTC also has a \$60.00 per hour rate for an unassisted teleconference in which users dial in directly with a pass code. In this case, there is no monitoring or assistance provided by the VTC. Charges may still be imposed for bridge time by the VTC if a scheduled teleconference is canceled less than twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled time.

To expedite arrangements, Rural Development offices can contact the VTC by calling (202) 720-6143, 720-8690 or 720-0209. When making arrangements, the VTC needs the date, length of time, number of lines needed and name of the

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moderator. Please use the appropriate Agency Identifier shown below when making a reservation:

RBS=RBS RHS=RHS RUS=RUS OCD=OCD O&M=O&M Other RD=OTH

Conference Rooms 0204 and 5030 can still be reserved by calling 692-0250. If teleconferencing is needed while using these two rooms, the Support Services Division will make those arrangements.

(Signed by J. Michael Clark)

J. MICHAEL CLARK
Director
Support Services Division

Sent by Facsimile on 08-15-00 at 11:20 a.m. by SSD.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT CASH
AWARDS DUE TO HUMAN
RESOURCES BY SEPTEMBER 8, 2000

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2000 Recommendations for Monetary Awards

TO: National Office Officials, RHS/RBS/RUS

DATE: August 15, 2000

We have been informed by the National Finance Center (NFC) that in order for Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 awards funds to be credited to this FY, all awards must be processed through NFC by September 22, 2000. If you are considering submitting any recommendations for monetary awards for FY 2000, you must ensure that they are received in Human Resources (HR) by September 8, 2000, to allow sufficient time to obtain the necessary review and approval and for processing. This is the cutoff date for HR processing regardless of any later date that NFC establishes for obligations in Central Accounting Database Inquiry System (CADI). The earlier due date to HR is due to the very large volume of cash awards that is typically received at this time of year.

As a result of Rural Development's limited resources, it is important to ensure that our employee recognition program is administered in the most effective way possible. All managers and supervisors should reward employees for specific achievements that produce positive results and ensure that employees are given an equal opportunity to be rewarded for their efforts. Managers and supervisors should also consider using non-monetary recognition such as time-off awards, plaques, and keepsakes as part of the recognition program. Non-monetary awards are valued as well as monetary recognition, and the form of recognition is less important than the act of recognizing an employee's accomplishment.

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All managers and supervisors for bargaining unit employees should use RD Instruction 2063-B as a guide when making recommendations for awards. All managers and supervisors for non-bargaining unit employees should use the Employee Recognition Policy for Rural Development employees effective April 1, 1999, as a guide when making recommendations for awards. The USDA Service Center Form SCA-4130, "Employee Recognition Nomination and Approval," can be used in place of Form AD-287-2, "Recommendation and Approval of Awards" for non-bargaining employees. You can retrieve this document off the internet at <http://dc.ffasintranet.usda.gov/hrd/cover.html>.

On page 10, paragraph (a) of Exhibit 1, of the common policy, it states that for award amounts of \$500 or less you should add taxes to the award amount. Until there is a method in place to process awards with taxes included, you should continue to set your award amounts without regard to taxes.

For cash awards of more than \$500, a written justification is needed as documentation. Exhibit 4 of the employee recognition policy gives an outline of what information should be included in a justification.

For bargaining unit employees, if you are considering giving an employee a lump-sum performance bonus, the employee must not have received a lump-sum performance bonus or Quality Step Increase (QSI) within the last 52 weeks. The employee must receive at least a fully successful or pass rating on their performance rating.

If you are considering giving a QSI to an employee, the employee must have received an outstanding rating on their rating of record, or a result achieved rating with the new Pass-Fail rating system. An employee can receive a QSI or performance bonus only if he or she has not received a performance bonus or QSI within the last 52 weeks. When determining this, use the effective date of the previous QSI, and not the ending date of the rating cycle. According to the USDA Guide for Employee Recognition, QSIs must be submitted for processing no later than 60 to 90 days after the rating period ends. The idea behind giving a QSI is to provide an immediate reward to an employee for their Outstanding performance. If the submission of QSIs are delayed, the employee is the one penalized.

If you are considering giving time-off awards as a form of recognition to your employees, remember that managers may grant up to 10 hours of time off without a higher level of review. Employees may be granted up to 80 hours in a leave year (January 1 - December 31). However, an employee cannot exceed 40 hours of time off for a single achievement. All time off awards must be used within 1 year of the date received. After the 1-year period, any unused time off will be forfeited. Managers also have the option of combining both time off and cash awards in order to fully recognize deserving individuals.

Due to budget constraints, there will be no certificates of merit issued for time off awards. For cash awards of \$500 or less, a certificate and holder will be issued, and for cash awards of \$500 or more a certificate and frame will be issued.

All managers and supervisors should be committed to ensuring that our recognition program meets the guidelines outlined in the USDA Guide for Employee Recognition, as well as the regulatory requirements and authorities under Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C) and the Code of Federal Regulation.

If you have any questions, please call Junius Scott, Personnel Management Specialist, at
(202) 692-0199.

(Signed by Timothy J. Ryan)

TIMOTHY J. RYAN
Assistant Administrator
for Human Resources

Sent by electronic mail on 08-17-00 at 9:20 a.m. by HR.

August 9, 2000

SUBJECT: Transit Subsidy Application for Benefits

TO: All Rural Development Employees

On April 21, 2000, the President signed Executive Order 13150, which states that Federal agencies will implement a transportation fringe benefit program in the National Capital Region (NCR) for employees who work in the Washington, D.C. area and offer farecard media to all qualified NCR employees by October 1, 2000. This means that employees in the NCR who use mass transportation to commute to and from work on a daily basis (e.g. bus, light rail, train, ferry, subway, authorized commuter highway vehicle, etc.) may be eligible to receive Metrocheks to defray commuting costs. The maximum amount allowable at this time is \$65 per month, or the actual commuting cost, whichever is lower.

The Executive Order also states that a pilot program will be operated nationwide to test the farecard media program. Those eligible employees outside the NCR will be authorized to participate in a pre-tax benefit (under which an amount is set aside from a salary to pay for the benefit and the employer purchases a farecard or voucher for the employee). USDA is considering whether to offer an employer funded farecard media program nationwide at a later date. In order to implement these mandates, the Department of Transportation will be administering the USDA Transit Subsidy benefits. The parking pre-tax information will be sent under a separate memo in the next few weeks. We recognize that there is information that is not explained in this memo. As soon as additional information is available, we will disseminate it to all employees.

If you are eligible for either of the benefits, please complete the attached application, distributed by USDA, and return it to Judy Steer, Rural Development Transit Coordinator, National Office, Stop 0742, no later than August 16, 2000. We are sorry for the extremely short response time, but USDA established the deadline in order to meet the October 1, 2000, effective date of the Executive Order.

Supervisors and managers are responsible for the proper notification of eligible employees who will be absent from the office beyond the August 16th deadline. If you have any questions, please contact Judy Steer on (202) 692-0012.

(Signed by J. Michael Clark)

J. MICHAEL CLARK
Director
Support Services Division

Attachment

EXPIRATION DATE:
August 31, 2001

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other
Program

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT PROGRAM APPLICATION

USDA Organization: USDA/Rural Development

Please check the appropriate benefit you are applying for: ____ agency paid transit benefit or ____ pre-tax transit benefit.

Are you currently receiving an agency paid transit benefit? ____Yes ____No

A. Applicant Information (Please Print or Type):

Last Name: _____ First

Name: _____ MI: _____

Home

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip

Code: _____

Work

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip

Code: _____

Work Telephone Number: _____ Last 4 digits of your

SSN: _____

Prior to applying for this benefit, did you drive to work or use some form of mass transit? _____

B. Modes of Transportation to be used to and from workplace :

Please provide the name of the transit company/system that you will use in the space below:

Bus _____ Light

Rail _____ Subway _____ Train _____

Ferry _____ Authorized *Commuter Highway

Vehicle _____

Other

(explain) _____

*Any highway vehicle with a seating capacity of at least 6 adults (not including the driver). At least 80 percent of the total mileage use of this vehicle can reasonably be expected to be for the purpose of transporting persons in connection with travel between their residences and their place of employment. During these trips passengers will number at least ½ of the adult seating capacity (not including the driver).

Please provide the specific type of fare media you use (e.g. ticket, pass, token, etc.): _____.

C. Employee Certification:

WARNING: This certification concerns a matter with the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States and making a false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may render the maker subject to criminal prosecution under title

18, United States Code, Section 1001, Civil Penalty Action, providing for administrative recoveries of up to \$10,000 per violation, and/or agency disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal.

I certify that I am employed by the Department of Agriculture.

I certify that I am eligible for a public transportation fare benefit, will use it for my daily commute to and from work, and will not give, sell, or transfer it to anyone else.

I certify that the monthly transit benefit I am receiving does not exceed my monthly commuting costs.

I certify that in any given month, I will not use the Government-provided transit benefit in excess of the statutory limit. If my commuting costs per month on public transit exceed the monthly statutory limit, then I will supplement those additional costs with my own funds rather than use a Government-provided transit benefit designated for use in a future month.

I certify that my usual monthly commuting costs are: \$_____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

D. Transit Subsidy Coordinator:

Name: Judy Steer
Coordinator

Title: Transit Subsidy

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: This information is solicited under authority of Public Law 101-509. Furnishing the information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so may result in disapproval of your request for a public transit fare benefit. The purpose of this information is to facilitate timely processing of your request, to ensure your eligibility, and to prevent misuse of the funds involved. This information will be matched with lists at other Federal agencies of Government-assigned parking to ensure consistency with mode of transportation checked.

July 26, 2000

SUBJECT: Planning FY 2000 Year End

TO: National Office Officials

This is an addendum to the unnumbered letter sent to National Office Officials on

July 20, 2000, which provided this year's contracting cut-off dates. The Procurement and Budget Divisions were informed late last week that, due to the tight schedule for converting to the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS), the deadline for the receipt of all FY 2000 requirements in the Procurement Management Division (PMD) must be changed. FY 2000 Procurement Requests (AD-700), with complete funding, specifications/documentation and any additional approvals, must be received in PMD by the dates below and awarded by September 22 in order to meet the FFIS conversion schedule.

We apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause. Please contact Veronica Moss on (202) 692-0110 or me as soon as possible for any planning assistance, contracting advice and/or approximate processing times. My telephone number is (202) 692-0244.

<u>TYPE OF ACTION</u>	<u>ESTIMATED AMT.</u>	<u>CUT-OFF DATE</u>
• Micro-purchase	up to \$2,500	9/13/00
• Simplified Acquisition (Small Business Source)	\$2,501-\$100,000	9/5/00
• Full and Open Competition	\$2,501-\$100,000	9/5/00
• 8(a)	less than \$3 million	9/1/00
• Task/Delivery Orders	up to \$100,000	9/8/00
	\$100,000 & over	9/1/00
• Modifications to contracts	all dollar amounts	9/1/00

(Signed by Veronica M. Moss)

for

CRAIG R. GORAL
Acting Director
Procurement Management Division

EXPIRATION DATE
September 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS
Administrative/Other Programs

Sent by Facsimile on 07-27-00 at 4:52 p.m. by SSD.

July 25, 2000

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2000 Mandatory Civil Rights Training

TO: National Office Officials
Rural Development State Directors

FROM: Leonard Hardy, Jr. *(Signed by Leonard Hardy, Jr.)*
Deputy Administrator
Operations and Management
Rural Development

mandatory civil rights online training officially began on June 30th, 2000, with a
ited "roll out" of 1,000 employees taking part in a beta test of the course.
loyees from the Rural Development Mission Area were included in this beta testing and
e provided good, constructive suggestions.

re is, however, some confusing language in the online material regarding the payment
this training. The National Office has set aside the funds to pay for this online
ining and submitted the paperwork to the USDA Graduate School. The individual states
not required to submit any paperwork, or transfer funds from their individual training
gets, to take care of this training. All paperwork and transfer of funds will be
dled here in the National Office.

that the Graduate School server will not be overloaded and because of the heavy volume
USDA employees who will be taking the course, the Lead Partner Administrator will
gger the process by designating a certain number of states to start the training. The
ining will start in the National Office to ensure that all the bugs have been resolved
ore we start the training in the individual states. It is essential for all employees
sign up for the training and get it completed within a reasonable time frame so the
sion Area can complete the training by September 30th, 2000.

you have any questions, please contact Helen Cordero, of the Civil Rights Staff, at
2) 692-0092 or by email at: hcordero@rdasun2.rurdev.usda.gov.

t by electronic mail on 07-25-00 at 12:55 p.m. by CRS.

IRATION DATE:
tember 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

July 20, 2000

SUBJECT: Unnumbered Letters Issued in June 2000

TO: Rural Development State Directors,
Rural Development Managers,
Community Development Managers, and
National Office Officials

Attached is the list of Unnumbered Letters issued for the month of June 2000.

Signed by Richard A. Gartman
for

JEANNE JACOBS
Chief, Regulations and Paperwork
Management Branch
Support Services Division

Attachment

EXPIRATION DATE:
July 31, 2001
or earlier when no longer
needed for reference

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

Sent by Facsimile on 07-24-00 at 8:25 a.m. by SSD.

UNNUMBERED LETTERS ISSUED FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2000

Dated	Subject	Distribution
06-01-00	Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (Brigitte A. Sumter)	S/D, NOO
06-05-00	Unnumbered Letters Issued in April 2000	S/D, RMD, CDM, NOO
06-06-00	Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 Public Law 104-134	S/D
06-07-00	Multi-Family Information System 2 Implementation Training	S/D
06-13-00	Rural Business-Cooperative Service Business Programs/Cooperative Services Fiscal Year 2000 National Training	S/D
06-15-00	Advisory and Assistance Services - Cost Certifications	S/D
06-19-00	Internet Rate Changes for Housing Programs and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)	S/D, RDM, CDM
06-20-00	Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program Funding Activity Statues Report - May 2000	S/D
	Debarment/Suspension Guidance for Field Office Staff	S/D
06-22-00	New Travel Management Center	NOO
06-26-00	Office of Worker's Compensation Program and Federal Worker 2000	S/D
06-29-00	Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program Distribution of Fees Received from North American Development Bank Community Adjustment and Initiative Program	S/D

July 12, 2000

TO: Rural Development
State Directors

FROM: James C. Kearney
Administrator
Rural Housing Service

SUBJECT: Non-Recoverable Program Loan Cost Expense Fund
Year-end Procedures, FY 2000

This memorandum is notification that all **non-recoverable** Program Loan Cost Expense (PLCE) funds not obligated by COB, **August 28, 2000**, will be pooled. All pooled funds will revert to National Office reserves. Only emergency needs after the pooling date will be considered for funding from the National Office reserves, and there is no guarantee that we will be able to fund all requests. You are therefore advised to plan the remainder of your commitments this year accordingly. You should also obligate any estimated recurring costs that you will incur during the remainder of the year such as profile credit reports which are normally billed at the end of each month.

It is still our policy that requests for additional funds not be submitted until you have obligated at least 90 percent of the allocation for your state. The amount of FY 2000 non-recoverable reserves obtained by pooling the balances in your PLCE Salaries and Expense Accounts is difficult to estimate, but will undoubtedly be extremely limited.

Please contact Carl Muhlbauer, Program Support Staff, at (202) 690-2141, if you have any questions concerning this memorandum.

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2000
Programs

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other

Sent by Facsimile on 07-13-00 at 4:15 p.m. by PSS. State Director should inform all appropriate personnel.

July 10, 2000

SUBJECT: Metro Fare Cards and Shuttle Service

TO: Rural Development
National Office Officials

Rural Development employees are authorized to use both Metro fare cards and shuttle services when conducting official business between buildings. Whenever it is reasonably convenient and timely, the use of the shuttle is the primary transportation method between the South, School Street, Reporters, Portals, NASA, and Park Center Buildings.

The following employees are authorized to disburse Metro fare cards to employees for use while on official business. All Rural Development employees are authorized to obtain cards from any of the people on this list.

South Building

Room 5013	Connie Rothwell
Room 5014	Angela Chittams
	Backup - Nancy Pollock
Room 2868	Brenda Taylor
	Backup - Gerald Nugent, Jr.
Room 4031	Debbie Cooper
	Backup - Mary Hoke
Room 6867	Arnita Shipp
	Backup - Wyethia Choice
Room 5050	Chris Humes
	Backup -Elsa DeLeon

NASA Building

Barbara Herring, Cheryl Harris, and Diane Weygand

EXPIRATION DATE:
June 30, 2001

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

Reporter's Building

Toni Brown
Backup - Leslie Rivas

Rosslyn

Mary Clarke
Backup - Phyllis Wade

School Street

Neil Storms
Backup - Sara Lewis

Please assure that your employees are aware of this memorandum. If your staff has any questions, they may call Bettina Cooke on 692-0010.

LEONARD HARDY, JR.
Deputy Administrator for
Operations and Management

June 22, 2000

SUBJECT: New Travel Management Center

TO: Rural Development National Office Officials

The current contract with American Express will expire on midnight, July 14th. Effective July 15, 2000, the new Travel Management Center for USDA will be Carlson Wagonlit (pronounced "Vagonle")(CWT). All travelers in the metropolitan Washington area must use CWT at that time. Although there are still many details to be worked out, the following reflects the latest information:

- CWT has two reservation centers: The Alexandria, Virginia, office hours are 7:30-5:30 Mon-Fri. The San Antonio, Texas, office will be operational 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. CWT is to be used for all official travel expenses on and after July 15. The American Express contract is valid until midnight, July 14. If you are in travel status during this transition time, we urge you to have the telephone numbers for each contractor, to enable you to communicate with both. A 24-hour phone number for CWT is 1-800-383-6723.
- Airlines, car rental and hotel reservations will be handled by USDA dedicated agents. CWT will make reservations, issue and deliver tickets for all commercial modes of travel, and make reservations for hotel/motel accommodations and car rental services. CWT staff must provide prompt, accurate and courteous service. If this is not the case, feel free to notify the Travel Staff. Reservations may be made by phone, fax, e-mail and on-line. The CWT web-site is www.cwgovernment.com.
- Most travelers will use their individual Bank of America, Visa charge card as the form of payment. Charges not made to an individual card will be charged to the Agency GVTs account. A member of the Travel Staff must approve all charges to the agency GVTs account.
- Transaction fees will appear on the invoice for individual accounts, domestic and international. Transaction fees may be claimed on the travel voucher as a miscellaneous expense.

EXPIRATION DATE:
December 31, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTION:
Administrative/Other Programs

Attached is a Personal Profile form. Completing the form is optional, not mandatory. It will enable the CWT agents to better assist you when you are making your reservations and may speed up future reservations if it is completed at this time (and faxed directly to CWT at the number shown on the form).

We hope this information helps with the transition from American Express to Carlson Wagonlit. We will provide you more information, as it becomes available. Please bring this matter to the attention of all travelers in your organization.

J. MICHAEL CLARK
Director
Support Services Division

Attachment

June 15, 2000

SUBJECT: Advisory and Assistance Services - Cost Certifications

TO: Rural Development State Directors

ATTENTION: Contract Program Mangers
Chiefs, Administrative Programs

As you know, cost certifications for Section 515 loans are considered advisory and assistance services. In order to streamline the approval process, the Procurement Management Division, in conjunction with the Multi-Family Housing Processing Division and the Program Support Staff, requested a blanket approval for these services. The Under Secretary's office approved this request on April 28, 2000.

Attached for your use is a copy of the approved letter, along with supporting documentation and a generic Statement of Work for the cost certifications. These documents should become a part of your cost certification file.

The approval process for funds certification has not changed. You should continue with the procedures that are in place for this portion of the cost certifications.

If you need further information regarding the blanket approval, please contact Craig Goral, Chief, Policy and Program Management Branch, at 202/692-0109. For information pertaining to funds approval, please contact Carl Wagner, Director, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, at 202/720-1610.

Signed by Christopher A. Gomez

CHRISTOPHER A GOMEZ
Assistant Administrator
Procurement and Administrative Services

3 Attachments (**Attachment not Automated**)

Sent by facsimile on 19 June 00 at 11:00 Hrs. by SSD.

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

May 18, 2000

SUBJECT: Update of State Internal Review (SIR) Handbook

TO: Rural Development State Directors

ATTN: Management Control Officers

The National Office officials will soon be updating the 2000 SIR Handbook for 2001. In the 1999 State Internal Reviews, several States made recommendations for revision. Additionally, many States have called the Financial Management Division (FMD) with suggestions.

The FMD coordinates the updates and publication of the State Internal Review (SIR) Handbooks. The appropriate National Office program/administrative area provides the annual updates and should be incorporating new instructions, as well as removing outdated questions and references. In order to assist the FMD with the SIR Handbook updates, the States are encouraged to send/fax specific necessary revisions and updates.

The FMD will assure that the recommendations are brought to the appropriate program/administrative manager=s attention for consideration. Please send or fax any suggested revisions to the FMD by **June 15, 2000**. It is important that the **June 15, 2000**, deadline be met in order to assure that the updated SIR Handbooks are distributed to the States by **October 1, 2000**. Any submissions received after the June 15, 2000, due date will not be considered in the Fiscal Year 2001 revision due to the short timeframe. The FMD fax number is **202-358-5656**.

signed

LEONARD HARDY, JR.
Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

EXPIRATION DATE:
December 31, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

April 27, 2000

TO: All Rural Development Employees

FROM: Leonard Hardy, Jr.
Deputy Administrator for
Operations and Management

SUBJECT: Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program

The Rural Development Civil Rights Staff recently distributed a pamphlet on a newly established program called Alternative Dispute Resolution.

The pamphlet contains important information about creative methods of resolving employment discrimination complaints. The pamphlet is intended to provide answers to questions you may have about ADR, and the role it will play in effectively resolving workplace conflicts.

ADR is available to all Rural Development employees, but **bargaining unit employees** must consult their union representative before participating in the program.

The pamphlet has been distributed to all State employees.

If you have any further questions that the pamphlet does not answer, contact our Civil Rights Director, Cheryl Prejean Greaux at (202) 692-0204.

Expiration Date:
December 31, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTION:
Administrative/Other Programs

April 25, 2000

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2000 Administrative Allotments
and Staff Year Allocations

TO: All Rural Development State Directors
National Office Allottees

In my memoranda of December 21, 1999, and February 14, 2000, I established the State Directors and National Office senior managers, respectively, as allottees for FY 2000 administrative funds. I explained that you are legally responsible and accountable for not exceeding the funding limit, and that these allotments are subject to the Antideficiency Act, which carries both civil and criminal penalties for violations in exceeding funding limits.

The Department Budget Manual, Departmental Regulation (DR) 2000-1 is the regulation controlling expenditures under the Antideficiency Act. DR 2000-1 refers to the allotment level as the administrative subdivision of funds considered to be subject to this level of control. Rural Development Instruction 2009-B outlines the general responsibilities for making allotments, limiting obligations and expenditures and requirements for reporting violations of the law. Rural Development Instruction 2009-B is a part of the Master Procedures File maintained in each State office and in central headquarters locations; however, an OGC opinion determined that since Rural Development Instruction 2009-B is applicable to this distribution of funds, a copy of this instruction should be furnished to each individual employee to whom these responsibilities are assigned. Accordingly, your individual copy is attached.

If you have any questions regarding this information or your responsibilities as an allottee, please contact Ann Dill, Director, Budget Division, at 202-692-0122.

/s/ Jill Long Thompson
JILL LONG THOMPSON
Under Secretary
Rural Development

Attachments
RD Instruction 2009-B
DR2000-1, Paragraphs 128,132

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other
Programs

April 11, 2000

SUBJECT: Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students
with Disabilities

TO: National Office Officials, RHS, RBS, RUS
Rural Development State Directors

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has announced its participation in the 2000 Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities (WRP). The WRP is a recruitment and referral program that provides a systematic review of applications from college students and recent college graduates with targeted disabilities for employment. To be eligible for this program, the students must have a targeted disability, be enrolled in a college or university working toward a degree or certificate, and be interviewed by a WRP recruiter.

The WRP is cosponsored by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities and the Department of Defense. In a memorandum dated October 16, 1999, a nationwide commitment was issued by the President to increase the employment of people with disabilities, including disabled veterans. Diversity Specialists estimate that as much as 37 percent of employees in the workforce of the future will be individuals with disabilities.

There are more than 1,000 students available for summer, temporary, student educational or permanent employment. The information on each student is available on a summary sheet. Most students who are on the database will be eligible for appointments under one of the special excepted authorities for persons with disabilities.

There will be adaptive technology services available for summer hires (e.g., telecommunication devices for individuals who are deaf and braille printers, screen readers, and other reading devices for individuals who are blind). Sign language interpreter services are also available in some locations. For more information on these services, you may contact the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) at (703) 681-8813.

EXPIRATION DATE:
December 31, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

There will be a limited amount of housing available for students employed in the Washington, D.C. area. Once a firm job offer has been made to a student, the student can contact the Housing Coordinator who will assist them in choosing and contacting a housing facility. There is no guarantee that housing will be available, so housing arrangements will need to be made immediately. The cutoff date for housing is May 5, 2000. Any students hired after this date must make their own housing arrangements. The Housing Coordinator is:

Ms. Diane Levesque
Voice: (703) 695-0105
Fax: (703) 695-4619
E.mail: levesqud@pr.osd.mil

For managers in field offices, low-cost housing should be identified for the employees. The cost of the housing is the employee's responsibility.

If you are interested in using the Workforce Recruitment Program, please complete the attached request application and fax it to Junius W. Scott, Personnel Management Specialist, at (202)-692-0295. If you have any questions, please call him at (202) 692-0199.

DIANA SHERMEYER
Director
Mission Area Personnel Services Division

Attachment

WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT PROGRAM
USDA Request for Position

Summer Position Title: _____ Series/Grade: _____

Office Location: _____

Is the office accessible by public
transportation?: _____

Job Duties/Responsibilities: _____

Required Knowledge, Skills, and
Abilities: _____

If you previously participated in this and like to request the same student
(if available), please indicate student's name:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Fax Number: _____

Please fax form to: Junius W. Scott, Agency Disability Employment Program
Manager, at (202) 692-0295 or email to jscott@rdmail.rural.usda.gov.

April 4, 2000

SUBJECT: Unnumbered Letters Issued in February 2000

TO: Rural Development State Directors,
Rural Development Managers,
Community Development Managers,
and National Office Officials

Attached is the list of Unnumbered Letters issued for the month of February 2000.

JEANNE JACOBS
Chief
Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch

Attachment

EXPIRATION DATE:	FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
February 28, 2001 or earlier	Administrative/Other Programs
when no longer needed for reference	

**UNNUMBERED LETTERS ISSUED FOR
THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2000**

Dated	Subject	Distribution
02-02-00	Rural Business Opportunity Grants Manual Obligation Process	S/D
02-02-00	Community Facilities Loan and Grant Programs	S/D
02-11-00	Rural Development Policy Statement on the Prohibition of Sexual Harassment	RD Employees
02-11-00	Policy Statement on Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights	RD Employees
02-14-00	Interest Rate Changes for Housing Programs and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)	S/D, RDM, CDM
02-15-00	UniFi/FASTeller Training	S/D
02-15-00	State Engineer Training	S/D
02-22-00	RHS/RBWS Basic Environmental Training	S/D
02-24-00	Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (Deanna Plauche)	NOO, S/D
02-24-00	Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (Bridzette M. Lane)	NOO, S/D
02-24-00	Business Industry Guaranteed Loan Program North American Development Bank Community Adjustment and Investment Program Maximum Size Limitation	S/D
02-25-00	Unnumbered Letters Issued in January 2000	S/D, RDM, CDM, NOO
02-28-00	FY 2000 Program Loan Cost Expense Funds for New Construction Multi-Family Housing Appraisals	S/D
02-29-00	Rural Community Facilities Tracking System Web FOCUS Training	S/D

March 30, 2000

SUBJECT: Advance Planning and Scheduling of Annual Leave to Avoid Leave
Restoration in Calendar Year 2000

TO: Rural Development National Office Officials
Rural Development State Directors

The purpose of this memorandum is to further remind everyone of the Rural Development policy concerning the importance of planning and scheduling accrued annual leave to avoid leave restoration at the end of the year.

I want to commend the efforts managers and supervisors have shown in planning and scheduling annual leave which has resulted in fewer requests from employees for restoration of forfeited annual leave. Those employees who in rare instances had no reasonable alternative but to forfeit scheduled leave, fully met the criteria for exigency for the public business. Rural Development will again this fiscal year be faced with maximizing the impact of reduced funding for staffing and other resources that support our programs. As a result, it is even more important that managers, supervisors, and employees monitor and schedule their leave throughout the year to avoid excessive annual leave carryover balances at the end of this leave year, January 13, 2001.

Although Rural Development has in the past had mission area-wide circumstances which necessitated approval of a nationwide exigency of the public business in connection with critical activities, I do not anticipate the need for a mission area-wide declaration of an exigency in the 2000 leave/calendar year. With proper leave planning early in the leave year by each employee, a petition for leave restoration will be necessary only in rare situations. Sufficient information must be furnished to document that a need for the public exigency exists and there is no reasonable alternative to canceling an employees's leave.

Leave approving officials must be aware of leave policies and procedures in collective bargaining agreements. Any questions concerning union issues should be referred to Sarah L. Smalls, Director, Labor Relations Staff, Human Resources, at (202) 692-0299.

/s/ JILL LONG THOMPSON

JILL LONG THOMPSON
Under Secretary
Rural Development

March 14, 2000

SUBJECT: State FFIS Representatives

TO: National Office Officials
Rural Development State Directors

ATTN: CADI Fund Control Officers

As you are aware, Rural Development is required to transition to the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS) on October 1, 2000. A major part of this transition is to review information in CADI and the related feeder systems (e.g. PRCH, TRAV, TRAI, etc.) to make sure they are accurate. This will include a review of all open items to determine validity.

I am requesting a point of contact from each state office and National Office Division to assist us in these efforts. My office will periodically send FFIS information and data for verification. Your point of contact is to assure distribution to the responsible parties and that data/information requested is returned by the due date.

Please send the following information for your FFIS point of contact:

Name:
Address:
Telephone number:
Fax number:
Email address:

You may fax your response to Deborah Collins at 314-539-2756 or e-mail her at deborah.collins@stl.rural.usda.gov, by close of business March 22, 2000. If you have any questions or need additional information, please call Deborah at 314-539-3520.

/s/

CHRISTINE C. BURGESS
Acting Chief Financial Officer

EXPIRATION DATE:
March 31, 2001

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

March 8, 2000

SUBJECT: Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy
Departmental Regulation 4300-3

TO: All Rural Development National Office Officials
All Rural Development State Directors

On November 16, 1999, USDA issued the subject Departmental Regulation which establishes policy to ensure positive and continuing notification of USDA equal opportunity to the public.

It is the policy of USDA not to discriminate against any person, as specified below. We are to communicate this policy to the public through all appropriate USDA public information channels. In addition, we are to reach out in proactive ways to persons who have not participated in our programs or activities through all public contacts.

One way of reaching out to the public is through the posting of the USDA Nondiscrimination Statement on all materials produced by USDA and its agencies for public information, public distribution, or public education. Section 7 of the Departmental Regulation provides a description of the USDA Nondiscrimination Statement.

This means that all documents -- such as brochures, fact sheets, annual progress reports and the like -- meant for public consumption should contain the following full nondiscrimination statement:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

However, if the material is deemed too small or otherwise unable to easily facilitate the full nondiscrimination statement -- such as on letterhead, newspaper advertisements, news releases, etc. -- the material will, at a minimum, include this shortened statement (in print size no smaller than the text):

EXPIRATION DATE: March 31, 2001

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Lender, Provider, and Employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

To comply with the Departmental Regulation, all Rural Development Agencies will replace their printed material, once their existing supplies have been exhausted, with the new nondiscrimination statement.

We are including a copy of the new directive for your review and guidance. If you should have any questions, please contact Cheryl Prejean Greaux, Director, Civil Rights Staff, on (202) 692-0204 (Voice), 692-0107 (TDD), or 692-0276 (Fax).

JILL LONG THOMPSON
Under Secretary
Rural Development

Attachment

March 2, 2000

TO: National Office Employees

FROM: Cheryl Prejean Greaux
Director
Civil Rights Staff

SUBJECT: Rural Development
Equal Employment Opportunity Programs

The alternative dispute resolution program launched July 13, 1999, is available to all employees seeking to proactively resolve conflicts. Rural Development increased the number of minorities in the workplace in 1999 and increased the number of Black and Asian employees, while the overall workforce decreased. Rural Development continues to have good representation (63.7 percent) of women in its workforce. Workforce statistics reflect steady increases for Hispanics, Asian American men, and American Indians in the GS-13 to GS-15 category.

Our mandated Special Emphasis Managers for Rural Development are:

Helen Cordero Disability Employment Program Manager
(202) 692-0092

Alice Green Federal Women's Program Manager
(314) 539-2966

Jacqueline Micheli Hispanic Employment Program Manager
(202) 692-0099

If you need additional information regarding employment programs for Rural Development, please contact me at (202) 692-0204 (Voice) or (202) 692-0107 (TDD).

Attachment (Not available on the Internet)

Feb. 11, 2000

SUBJECT: Policy Statement on Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights

TO: All Rural Development Employees

Assuring equal opportunity in employment and program delivery is a key ingredient in all Rural Development programs. We have come far in providing opportunity for all Rural Development employees. We have also come far in opening our programs to all qualified applicants; however, the road ahead is full of opportunity improvement.

Civil Rights laws require that Federal employment and Federal programs be conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner. Specifically, it is prohibited to discriminate unlawfully against anyone on the basis of race, color, religion, sex marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, age, or disability in employment or program delivery. It also is unlawful to take any act of reprisal against anyone for involvement in equal opportunity activities.

Equality in all aspects of the employment experience must be the hallmark of our human resource management system, promotions, awards, and developmental assignments. Our overall objective is to make it possible for all employees to have equal access to the rewards as well as to the responsibilities of making this fine organization function smoothly for the benefit of rural America.

To achieve this objective, all supervisors and managers must develop a positive, problem-solving approach to handling employment discrimination complaints, to work at understanding the basis for complaints, and to make every efforts to improve communications among ourselves to avoid misunderstandings that lead to EEO discrimination complaints, as well as union and employment grievances.

We must reach out to those groups which historically have been neglected, and insure that we are inclusive rather than exclusive, in all aspects of our program delivery. We must identify barriers that have prevented full participation of underserved groups and develop innovative strategies to overcome these barriers.

EXPIRATION DATE:
January 30, 2002

FILLING INSTRUCTION
Administrative/Other Program

Let me assure you that this statement is an affirmation of my personal commitment to equal opportunity in the workplace and in the delivery of programs. The success of our civil rights program is dependent upon each of us and is measured by the public we serve. Consequently, our success is directly related to the effectiveness of our civil rights program.

I am personally committed to a strong civil rights program. I expect the same commitment from each employee, supervisor, and manager.

I am asking each person to join Team USDA Rural Development to make our civil rights program one that we can look upon with pride.

/S/

JILL LONG THOMPSON
Under Secretary
Rural Development

December 27, 1999

SUBJECT: Delegation of Agency Technical Approval Authority
for Fiscal Year 2000

TO: Rural Development State Directors

The purpose of this memorandum is to delegate agency Technical Approval (TA) authority for specific Federal Information Processing (FIP) resources based on the conditions described below.

This memorandum delegates to you Agency TA authority within the limits described below. This authority may be redelegated by you to subordinates as necessary.

1. **FIP Supplies:** Individual orders may not exceed \$10,000 and the total yearly amount may not exceed your supply budget allocation; e.g., printer cartridges, diskettes, tapes.
2. **FIP Support Services:** Each order may not exceed \$2,500 and the total yearly amount may not exceed \$25,000. FIP support services related to telecommunications are further restricted, as described in 3 (b), below.
3. **Telecommunication Needs:**
 - (a) **Services:** These may be paid as necessary up to your telecommunications budget allocations. However, any new 1-800 number services must be approved by the full field services committee; consequently, requests for new 1-800 number services must be submitted to the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for appropriate referral.
 - (b) **Hardware, Software, and Support Services:** This approval authorizes the acquisition of any hardware, software, or support service required to continue the operation of currently installed, previously approved hardware and software for voice and data transmission. This delegation does not include the acquisition of FIP resources for the establishment of new office setups.
4. **FIP Maintenance:** Most of the Agency FIP equipment is maintained under a nationwide maintenance contract operated by IBM. If you have FIP equipment not covered under the IBM contract, you should seek approval from the Chief

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

Information Officer to add the equipment to the IBM contract. If the equipment cannot be added to the IBM contract, maintenance orders for each piece of equipment shall be placed by your office, but the dollar amount of each order may not exceed \$25,000.

5. **FIP Equipment:** Requests for FIP equipment other than as described under 3(b), above, must be submitted to the CIO for review.

6. **FIP Software:** FIP software purchases must be made in accordance with RD Instruction 2006-V, Policies for Rural Development software. This delegation permits State Directors to purchase up to two copies of any commercial software. Purchases in excess of this amount must be submitted to the CIO for review.

Acquisitions that fall outside of the scope of this delegation memorandum must be submitted to the CIO to obtain TA. Depending on the dollar value, the acquisition may require TA from the Department.

This delegation mandates that other provisions of Federal (i.e., Federal Acquisition Regulations), USDA, and Rural Development regulations be followed. These provisions require certain analyses (e.g., requirements analysis, analysis of alternatives, and benefit cost analysis) be completed to support acquisition of FIP resources other than supplies. Attached is a two-page form that, when completed, will assist you in satisfying this requirement. When procuring FIP supplies, it is only necessary to provide a brief justification usually on the procurement request itself. Copies of the appropriate documentation must be maintained with your procurement files. The Information Resources Manager would be responsible for ensuring that TA requirements are met.

Questions regarding these issues should be directed to Steven R. Myers, Director, Management Control Staff, at (202) 692-0052.

LEONARD HARDY, JR.
Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

Attachment (Not available on the Internet)

December 21, 1999

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2000 Administrative Budget Allotments
and Full-Time Equivalent Allocations

TO: All Rural Development State Directors

This memorandum provides your initial State administrative funds allotments and full-time equivalent (FTE) ceilings for Fiscal Year (FY) 2000. With the allotment of these funds, each State Director assumes full control of and responsibility for the funds. Within legal guidelines, you may determine how funds will be spent in order to best utilize the available resources for your State. Funds may be reprogrammed to meet your specific needs without having to obtain prior approval from the National Office. Please remember, you now have the legal responsibility for not spending more than the amount provided and will be held accountable under the Antideficiency Act if funding limits are exceeded.

Rural Development Instruction 2009-B outlines the general responsibilities for limiting obligations and expenditures, as well as requirements for reporting violations of the Antideficiency Act. Violations of the law carry both civil and criminal penalties. It is essential that you plan carefully for the use of your administrative resources, monitor them closely to ensure that obligations do not exceed authorized levels and that funds remain available to meet all of your administrative needs, including salaries and benefits, throughout the entire fiscal year.

Although States will receive an allocation for their full FY 2000 FTE ceiling, the hiring freeze will remain in effect until further notice. As a result of the freeze, funding for the salaries and benefits allotments have been calculated based on each State's actual on-board employment levels reported on the National Finance Center (NFC) SF-113G report as of November 20, 1999, which were then multiplied by that State's average salary and benefit rate. Funding for promotions and within-grade increases were calculated based on the full FTE ceiling for the entire fiscal year, and the full amount was included in the allotment. Costs associated with the pay raise are not included in this allotment. These costs will be individually calculated for each State after the pay raise takes effect in January in order to utilize the regional locality rates.

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

Under the hiring freeze, States have been authorized to apply to my office for waivers to permit them to hire additional employees within their FTE ceiling. If approval is granted, the State must provide the following information to the Budget Division: the employee's name, grade/step, actual salary and benefits rate, and start date. When this information is received by the Budget Division, the State's allotment will be increased to cover the additional salary and benefits cost for the new employee.

As has been the case in prior years, States have not been provided with funding to cover lump sum payments to separated employees for unused annual leave (object class 1183) or severance pay for former employees (object class 1301). The National Office will review the monthly NFC reports and will automatically reimburse States for charges incurred in these object classes. Revised allotment notices increasing State funds by the appropriate amount will be issued on a quarterly basis subsequent to charges being incurred.

There has been an across-the-board reduction in the general support allotments for headquarters and field offices. The overall FY 2000 State general support level was calculated by reducing the FY 1999 initial allotment level for the field in total by 20.7 percent. The revised level was then distributed based on each State's FY 2000 FTE ceiling.

In FY 2000, all States are required to continue to use the Central Accounting Database Inquiry/Funds Control System (CADI), including the Salaries and Benefits (S&B) module, to record and monitor administrative allotments. Each State should develop an administrative operating plan based on the funding amounts shown on the attachment. State plans, including salaries and benefits, must be entered into the National Finance Center (NFC) Budget and Operating Plan System (PLAN) by January 31, 2000. The NFC PLAN should be adjusted as necessary throughout the fiscal year to reflect reprogrammings or other changes. (There is no requirement to submit copies of your plan to the National Office.) During the fiscal year, all transactions initiated and/or processed by your State must be immediately entered into CADI and all unmatched transactions must be reconciled on a weekly basis.

Currently, States receive the RC 502-ADM-14, Status of Allotment Ledger Accounts Object Class Distribution of Administrative Expense Obligations, report from NFC. This report shows all obligations incurred against each State's cost center and is the official document used by NFC to report obligations to the Department of the Treasury. This report should be monitored to ensure that all administrative obligation amounts, including salary and benefit costs, are consistent with your CADI amounts.

States will continue to monitor salaries and benefits through the CADI S&B module and CADI management reports. S&B ties directly into IRIS, the payroll/personnel database, and automatically calculates within grade increases, ladder promotions, etc. S&B ad hoc reports provide information on actual salary and benefit expenses in each State along with the capability to run projections based on different staffing scenarios.

The S&B module also provides a projection of anticipated costs for all unpaid pay periods for the remainder of the fiscal year. Many States have been entering the projection amount into CADI as a commitment using the AD-700 screen. This permits the States to get a more accurate view of their funding situation and any potential overages or lapses at year-end. Use of this tool is mandatory; however, in order to be used effectively, States must remember to make the necessary adjustments in CADI every two weeks as the additional pay periods process in order to avoid double counting of payroll costs.

States will continue to be responsible for tracking their full-time equivalent (FTE) levels. FTE levels can also be tracked through the S&B module. The FTE levels provided to your State on the attachment include all types of employment in your State, i.e. full-time and part-time permanent and temporary employment, intermittent employment and any special employment categories. Overtime expenses are charged against your administrative allotment, but are not charged against your FTE ceiling; therefore, the overtime amount included in the total FTE amount reflected in the CADI S&B module will need to be manually backed out in order to achieve a true FTE total.

The FTE level is a cumulative measure of all the regular time worked by all employees in your State throughout the entire fiscal year. Every regular hour worked by every employee in your State counts against your FTE ceiling. The State Director is responsible for developing an employment plan which will result in each State staying within their FTE ceiling. An FTE overage could result in a shortage of funds and an antideficiency status.

In recent fiscal years, the mission area has been exposed to a large number of unforeseen Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and civil rights cases that were not included in the agency budget projections. As stipulated in FY 1999, any civil rights, EEO, or tort claim settlements resulting from post-1998 actions will be paid from State administrative allotments.

Questions regarding your administrative allotment should be directed to Susan Nance, Chief, Administrative Programs Branch, Budget Division, at 202-692-0130.

/s/ Jill Long Thompson
JILL LONG THOMPSON
Under Secretary
Rural Development

Attachments (Not available on the Internet)

December 21, 1999

SUBJECT: Unnumbered Letters Issued In November 1999

TO: Rural Development State Directors,
Rural Development Managers,
Community Development Managers,
and National Office Officials

Attached is the list of Unnumbered Letters issued for the month of November 1999.

/s/

JEANNE JACOBS
Chief
Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch

Attachment

EXPIRATION DATE: December 31, 2000
or earlier when no longer
needed for reference

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other
Programs

UNNUMBERED LETTERS ISSUED FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1999

Dated	Subject	Distribution
11-02-99	Report of Unauthorized Assistance	S/D
11-02-99	Y2K Business Continuity Contingency Plan (BCCP)	S/D, NOO
11-04-99	Guidelines for the Development of FY 2000 Civil Rights Implementation Plan Update and Supporting Workload and Performance Data	S/D
11-05-99	National Office CADI/Funds Control System (CADI) Users Group Teleconference	NOO
11-05-99	State Office CADI/Funds Control System (CADI) Users Group Teleconference	S/D
11-08-99	Security Requirements for Loans to Native Americans	S/D
11-09-99	Transportation Incentives	RD Employees
11-16-99	Awards	NO Employees
11-23-99	Unnumbered Letters Issued In October 1999	S/D, RDM, CDM, NOO
11-24-99	Issuance of Property Passes	NOO
11-24-99	New Shuttle Schedule	NOO
11-30-99	Interest Rate Changes for Housing Programs and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)	S/D, RDM, CDM

November 24, 1999

SUBJECT: New Shuttle Schedule

TO: Rural Development National Office Officials

Attached is the new shuttle schedule for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) shuttle. Please note that not only did pickup times change but that the Portals Building was added as a stop. The schedule is effective on Monday, November 29th. Please distribute to all employees.

/s/ J. Michael Clark

J. MICHAEL CLARK
Director
Support Services Division

Attachment (Not available on the Internet)

EXPIRATION DATE:
November 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

November 24,1999

SUBJECT: Issuance of Property Passes

TO: Rural Development National Office Officials

Effective immediately, any employee requiring a property pass to remove equipment, personal items, etc. from the South Building or the NASA Building must present a letter or note, signed by their supervisor, authorizing the removal of said property to the individual issuing the property pass. The letter or note will be maintained as part of the official property pass records.

Issuers of property passes have been instructed not to issue a property pass without a letter or note from the employee's supervisor.

Contractors who are removing equipment for repair do not need a letter of authorization to remove equipment from either building. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Judy Steer at (202) 692-0012.

CHRISTOPHER A. GOMEZ
Assistant Administrator for
Procurement and Administrative Services

EXPIRATION DATE:

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

November 30, 2000

Administrative/Other Programs

October 22, 1999

SUBJECT: Franklin Planners

TO: Rural Development National Office Officials

The budget for FY 2000 is uncertain. We are making every effort to reduce spending wherever possible for supplies. The Support Services Division has reviewed last year's expenditures for Franklin Planner refills and accessories and has found a less expensive alternative.

I am urging offices to purchase the Day Max Planner, which offers day-at-a-glance, week-at-a-glance, and month-at-a-glance refills. The refills fit Franklin Planner binders. By purchasing the Day Max Planner we will realize a 40% savings on each refill ordered. The Day Max Planner is a product of Easter Seals (a mandatory source) and is delivered within 2 to 3 days from the company receiving the order. The Day Max Planner offers additional accessories to accompany its planner just like its counterpart the Franklin Planner.

If you would like additional information about the Day Max Planner please visit their website at www.daymax.com.

LEONARD HARDY, JR.
Deputy Administrator for
Operations and Management

EXPIRATION DATE:
October 30, 2000

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other Programs

October 20, 1999

SUBJECT: FY 2000 Procurement Preference Program Goals

TO: Rural Development State Directors

ATTN: Chiefs, Administrative Programs,
Contract Program Managers

This memorandum transmits the FY 2000 Procurement Preference Program goals for Rural Development (Attachment 1). The FY 2000 goals will be uniform for all contracting offices. While it is preferable to negotiate individual goals for each office, the unknown factors of administrative convergence make this impossible for FY 2000. The FY 2000 goals are the same as the FY 1999 goals, with the exception of the new HUBZone goal, which is 1.5%, and the 1% increase in the 8(a) goal. The goals reflect our continuing commitment to improve contracting opportunities for small business concerns, starting with market research to identify qualified small businesses early in the acquisition process.

The HUBZone program goal is new to the agencies this year. The Small Business Administration (SBA) is now certifying firms as HUBZone concerns and entering information concerning those certified firms into the PRO-Net automated system. There are currently 200 firms certified as HUBZone concerns in three major areas: services, construction, and manufacturing. SBA's PRO-Net can be accessed via the USDA Acquisition Toolkit web site (<http://www.usda.gov/da/procure.html>). To help meet this new goal, your contracting staff should become familiar with HUBZone firms in your state and adjacent market areas. Efforts to identify and encourage companies which meet HUBZone eligibility criteria to become certified by SBA should be a part of your outreach program and accomplishments.

An important factor in achieving the preference program goals is accurate reporting. While it has always been important to ensure the accuracy of the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), a change in the SBA's procedures for obtaining data on each agency's preference program performance make accurate reporting even more important. Starting in FY 2000, the SBA will obtain information directly from the FPDS. This means that the Department and Agency will not have the same opportunity to review, verify and correct data before it is reported to SBA, as has

EXPIRATION DATE:
September 30, 2000

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been done in the past. Please stress this important change to your staff members who are responsible for procurement information.

If you or your staff members have any questions about the Preference Program, please contact Elaine Larison, Director, Procurement Management Division, on (202)692-0245, or Sandy Ellixson, Procurement Analyst, on (202)692-0108.

LEONARD HARDY, JR.
Deputy Administrator
for Operations and Management

Attachment (Not available on the Internet)

September 7, 1999

SUBJECT: Unnumbered Letters Issued In July 1999

TO: Rural Development State Directors,
Rural Development Managers,
Community Development Managers,
and National Office Officials

Attached is the list of Unnumbered Letters issued for the month of July 1999.

JEANNE JACOBS
Chief
Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch

Attachment

EXPIRATION DATE: September 30, 2000
or earlier when no longer
needed for reference

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:
Administrative/Other
Programs

UNNUMBERED LETTERS ISSUED FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 1999

Dated	Subject	Distribution
07-01-99	Court-Ordered Discovery on Contempt of Court Charge for On-Farm Labor Housing Program	S/D
07-06-99	Advanced Cooperative Specialist Training	S/D
07-06-99	Architectural and Environmental Technical Support Training	S/D
07-06-99	Suspend Distribution of USDA Audit Program Booklets Item No. 222 and 222A	S/D, NOO
07-14-99	Electronic Funds Transfer Teleconference - Change of Bridge Number and Pass Code	S/D
07-14-99	Merit Promotion Plan	RD Employees
07-19-99	Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (Laura C. Batcheller)	NOO, S/D
07-20-99	Interest Rate Changes for Housing Programs and Credit Sales (Nonprogram)	S/D, RDM, CDM
07-20-99	Audit Reports Tracking System Training	S/D
07-21-99	Identification of Community and Migrant Health Centers	S/D
07-21-99	3 rd Annual Rural Development National Training Conference	S/D
07-22-99	Employee Recognition Program	RD Employees
07-23-99	Information Technology Training * AL, DE, GA, ID, IA, IL, IN, KS, MA, MS, MO, MT, OH, TX, WY, and Finance Office	* Sel. S/D
07-26-99	Non-Recoverable Program Loan Cost Expense Fund Year-end Procedures, FY 1999	S/D
07-30-99	1999 National Rural Economic Developers Association Annual Conference	S/D